

CPYRGHT

RUDOLF ABEL TRIAL DISCUSSED

[Article by A.V. Tishkov: "Rudolf Abel Before the American Court";*
Moscow, Sovetskoye gosudarstvo i pravo, Russian, No 5, 1969, pp 127-133]

Throughout the whole trial Abel's brain and hands were continually employed. He made notes in order to discuss them later with his defender. Or he drew sketches. He sketched Heyhannen, the jurors, Judge Byers, Prosecutor Tompkins, and the court employees.

Abel gave the impression of a cold and impassive man. Reporters wrote that he behaved like an observer, uninterested in the course of the trial. This, of course, was a great mistake. "Only iron self-discipline enabled him to sit silent and quiet without showing the least sign that he was enduring physical (a gastric illness -- A.T.) and emotional torture," wrote Donovan, who knew his client better than did the others.

The jurors conferred three and a half hours. Casting aside their emotions and going against their conscience to which the defense counsel had vainly appealed, they brought in a verdict -- guilty. At the defense's request the jurors were individually polled. And twelve more times the courtroom rang with 'guilty.' Abel sat seemingly absolutely quiet. Not a muscle of his face trembled when he heard those endlessly echoing guiltyes....

The defense moved that the verdict be vacated as contrary to evidence. The judge denied this motion and set the date for passing sentence -- 15 November. Twenty more long, wearisome days of waiting....

The day before sentence was pronounced Donovan sent Byers a letter stating that in the interests of the United States it would be expedient to spare Abel's life. He had previously discussed this question in Washington with representatives of "interested" agencies and departments, including the Department of Justice.

The letter was read at the November 15th court session before sentence was pronounced so that it was included in the record. It again

*Conclusion. For beginning see Sovetskoye gosudarstvo i pravo, No 4, 1969.